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Iraq

Status Report

March 31, 2010



Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
U.S. Department of State

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HIGHLIGHTS



- **IHEC Announces Preliminary Ballot Results (*POLITICAL*, page 4)**
- **Bombing in Anbar Kills 6 Including Faction Official with Allawi Coalition (*SECURITY*, page 9)**
- **Russia's Gazprom Claims the Iraqi Government is Responsible for Demining Oil Fields (*ECONOMIC*, page 12)**
- **Iraq Attends Arab Summit (*DIPLOMATIC*, page 17)**

POLITICAL – Governance & Legislation

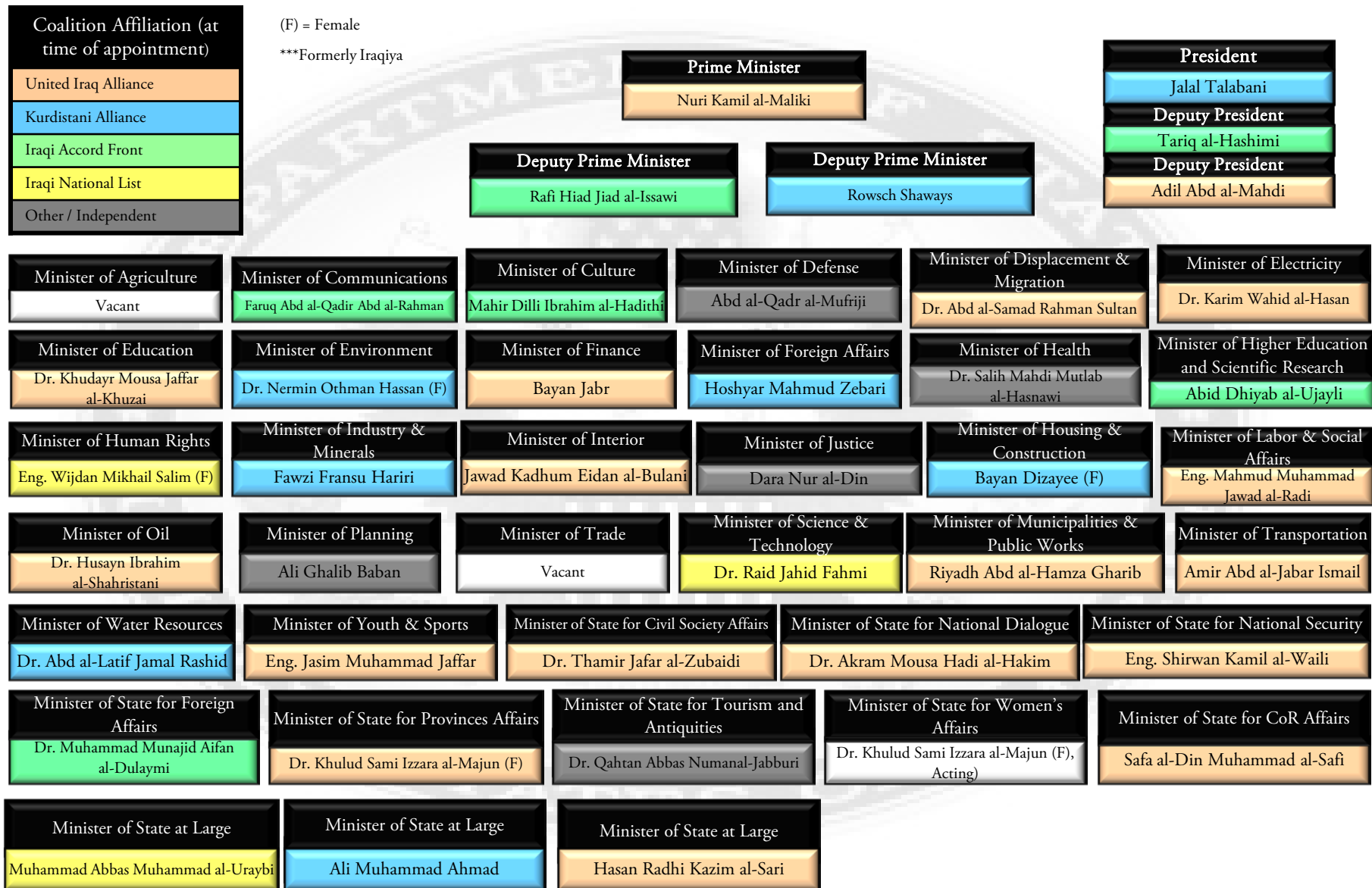


Preliminary election results announced

IHEC Announces Preliminary Ballot Results:

- **Iraq's Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) announced the preliminary results of Iraq's parliamentary election on March 26. According to IHEC, the Iraqiyya Party won 91 seats in the parliament, the State of Law coalition won 89, the Iraqi National Alliance won 70, and the Kurdish Alliance won 43. These results will be certified by the Federal Supreme Court after all complaints raised with the Court have been resolved.**

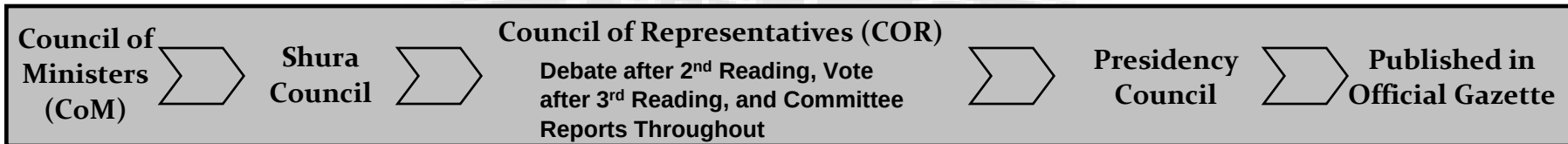
POLITICAL – Government of Iraq



POLITICAL – Key Legislative Issues



Legislative Process



- **Hydrocarbons Package:** The Framework Law was resubmitted to the Oil and Gas Committee on October 26, 2008 and then returned to the Council of Ministers. There has been no progress on the other three laws in the package.
- **NGO Law:** This law, approved March 3, will regulate the operations and funding of Non-Governmental Organizations operating within Iraq.
- **National Elections Law:** The amended election law was approved by the Presidency Council on December 6, 2009.

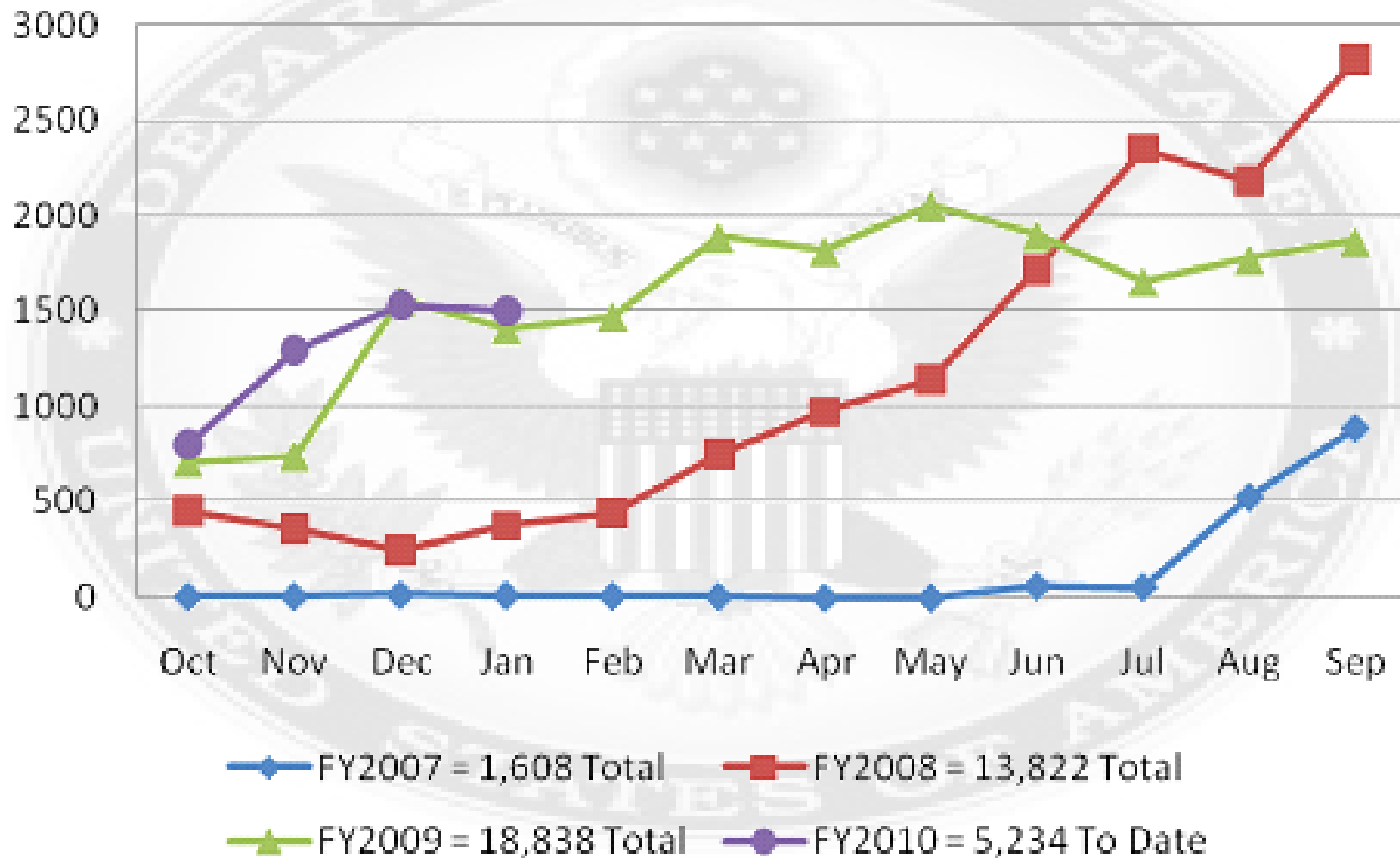
POLITICAL – Refugee Update



- There are approximately 295,000 Iraqi refugees currently registered with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in neighboring countries. There are likely significant numbers of unregistered refugees as well. UNHCR reports that 1.5 million Iraqis remain internally displaced due to sectarian violence following the Samarra Mosque bombing of February 2006.
- In FY09, the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration contributed \$303.4 million to international and nongovernmental organizations to assist displaced Iraqis inside the country and in the region.
- Since the program's inception in FY07, 42,388 Iraqi refugees have been admitted to the U.S. for resettlement. A total of 18,838 refugees were admitted in FY09.
- As of September 2009, a total of 1,606 Special Immigrant Visa (SIVs) have been issued for Iraqi translators and interpreters (and their dependents) since FY07 (under the Section 1059 program).
- As of September 2009, a total of 3,028 SIVs have been issued for Iraqis employed by the U.S. government (and their dependents) since FY08 (under the Section 1244 program).
- Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced on July 24 that the United States was contributing more than \$100 million in new assistance to support the return and reintegration of displaced Iraqis.

POLITICAL – Refugee Update

Iraqi Admissions to the U.S.



SECURITY – Situation Update



Post-election violence draws concerted action from Iraqi Security Forces

Bombing in Anbar Kills 6 Including Faction Official with Allawi Coalition:

- An official in former PM Ayad Allawi's electoral coalition was among six people killed in a series of bombings in Anbar province last week. Ghanim Radhi, a member of the Development and Reforms party and member of Allawi's Iraqiya Coalition, was killed after several bombs detonated near his home. A second series of bombs also detonated as people gathered at the scene.

Teenage Suicide Bomber Targets Local Anti-Terror Chief in Anbar; Kills Three:

- Three people were killed in an attack by a teenage suicide bomber in the town of Heet, 35 miles outside of Ramadi in Anbar province. The intended target was the home of local anti-terrorism chief Lieutenant Colonel Walid Sulaiman al-Heeti. Heeti led "a campaign against Al-Qaeda in the mostly Sunni province that helped dramatically reduce the terror network's presence in Anbar, Iraq's biggest province in area." Heeti himself was not harmed, but a police officer and two builders were killed. This is the second attack on Heeti's home in recent months.

Two Car Bombings in Karbala Kill 5 and Wound 64; Shi'a Sites Targeted:

- Five people were killed and at least 64 wounded following two car bombings in Karbala south of Baghdad. The attacks happened outside a restaurant popular with Shi'a pilgrims and a security checkpoint near the Imam Hussein shrine, one of the holiest sites in Shi'a Islam.

SECURITY – Situation Update



Post-election violence draws concerted action from Iraqi Security Forces

Suspected AQI Leader for Abu Ghraib Captured:

- The suspected leader of Al-Qaida in Iraq (AQI) for the Abu Ghraib region was captured during a joint operation between ISF and U.S. advisors. The suspect is believed responsible for planning multiple vehicle-borne IED attacks against the Iraqi government.

Suspected AQI Emir for Baghdad Killed:

- The suspected Al-Qaida in Iraq (AQI) Sharia Emir for Baghdad was killed March 26 in a joint operation conducted by Iraqi Security Forces and U.S. advisors in northern Baghdad. Sinan, also known as Mohannad Rahman Salim Muhaymid al-Ani, is “believed to be one of the primary approval authorities for AQI attacks and assassinations in the Baghdad region.” Three accomplices of the suspect were later arrested.

Fourteen AQI Suspects Arrested During Joint Operations:

- Fourteen suspected members of Al-Qaida in Iraq (AQI) were arrested in northern Iraq during three joint operations conducted by Iraqi Security Forces and U.S. advisors. The arrests came after authorities searched resident building in pursuit of the suspects. A suspected AQI leader believed responsible for a series of assassinations and IED attacks was one of those captured.

ECONOMIC – Oil



Crude Oil Update:

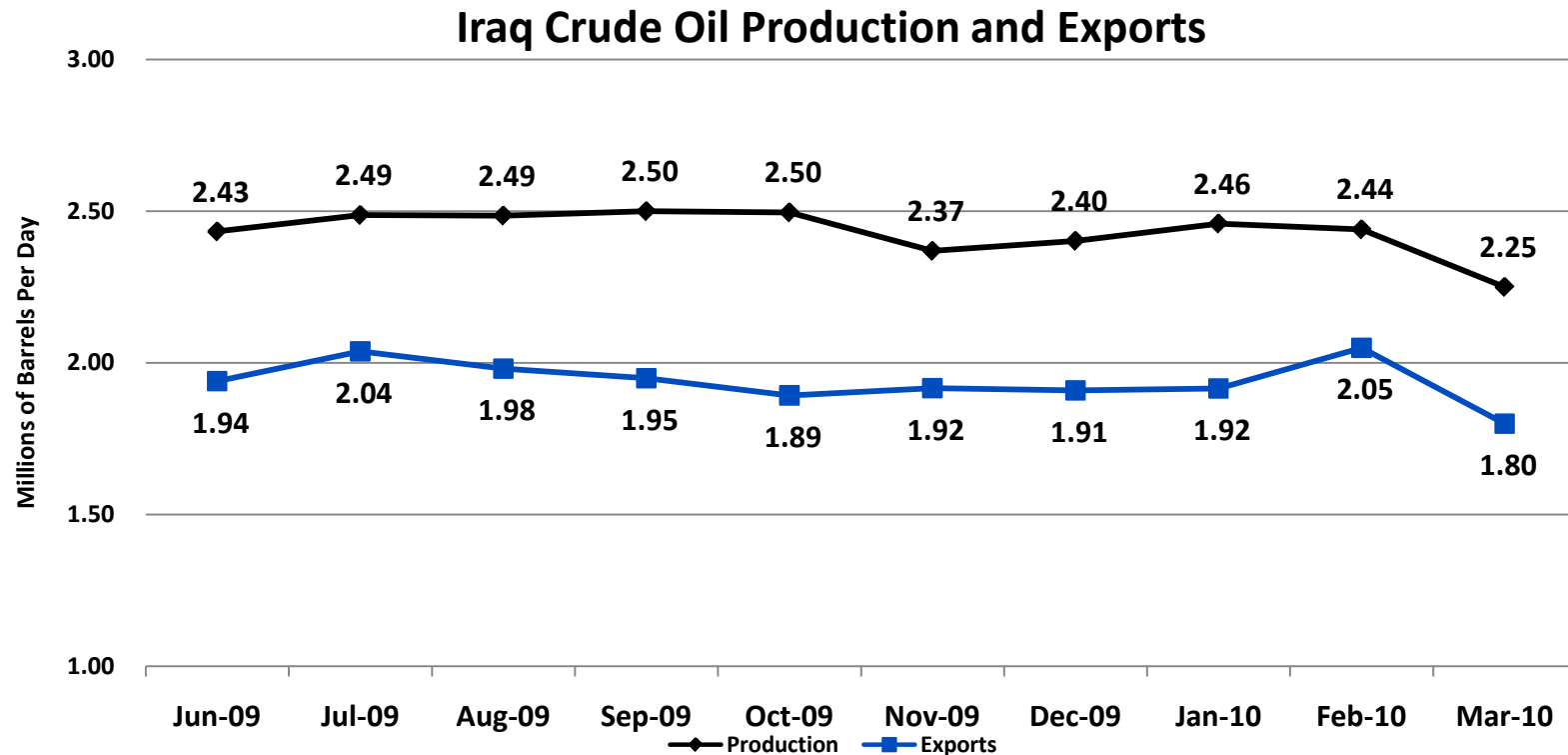
Price averages in world markets closed with the following prices:

Basrah Light at \$76.77/barrel

Dated Brent at \$78.89/barrel

WTI Cushing at \$80.68/barrel

Oman/Dubai at \$77.42/barrel



Revenue estimates:

2008: \$61.9 Billion

2009: \$39.2 Billion

2010 (ytd): \$12 Billion

ECONOMIC – Oil/Gas



Demining will be a key issue for international oil companies

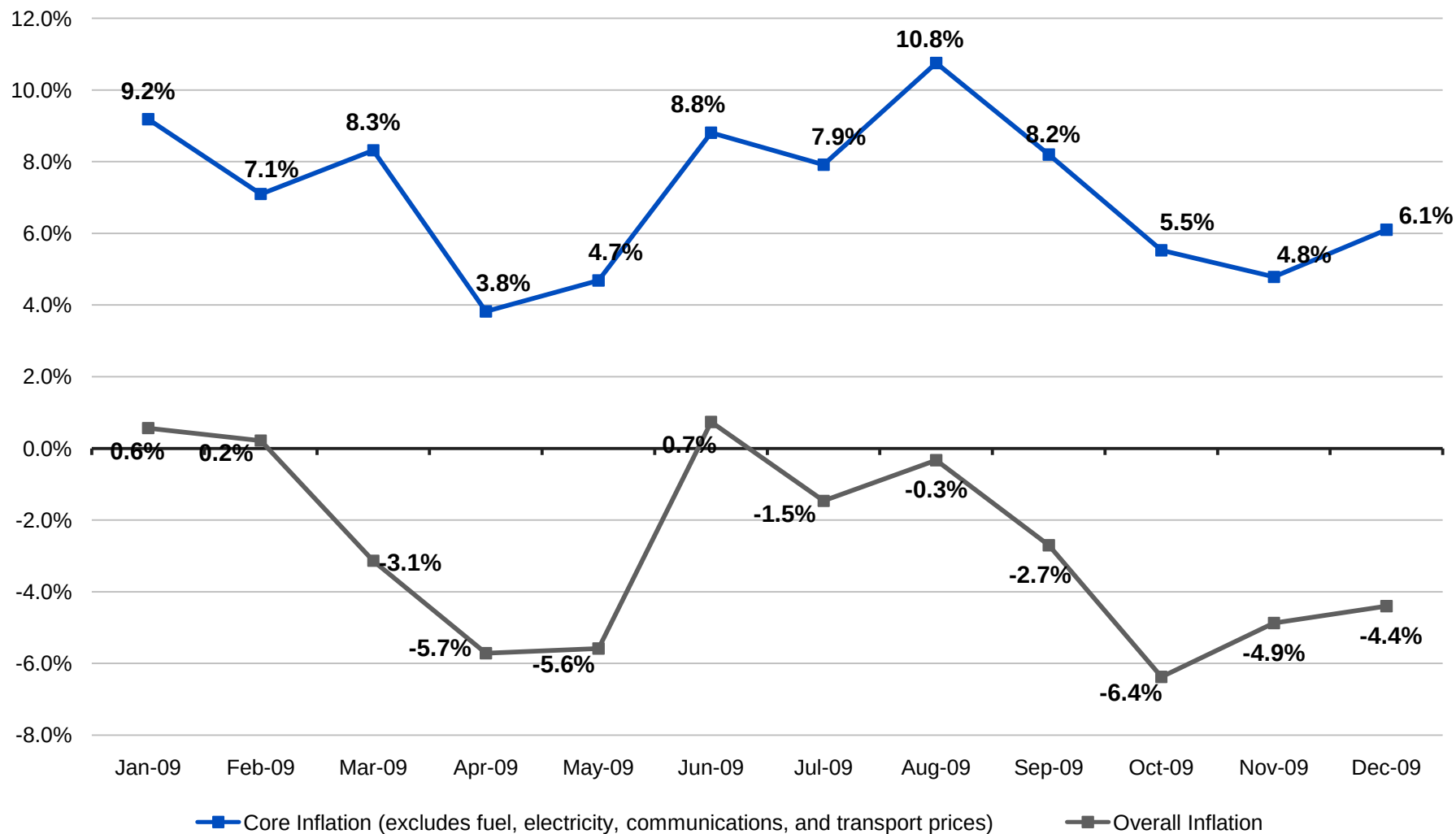
Russia's Gazprom Claims the Iraqi Government is Responsible for Demining Oil Fields:

- **Iraqi authorities report that there are more than 27 million pieces of unexploded ordnance in Iraq from the war with Iran from 1980 to 1988. The largest number of mines is near border fields, including Badra in Wasit province and Majnoon in Basrah province. Russia's Gazprom Neft has claimed publicly that the Iraqi Government is responsible for the removal of mines and unexploded ordnance. The demining issue could delay the development of certain border fields.**

ECONOMIC – Fiscal and Monetary Affairs



Year-on-Year Inflation



ECONOMIC – Fiscal and Monetary Affairs



Economic Indicator	This Week	Last Week	Last Month	Last Year
Iraqi Debt Swap Bond Prices and Yields				
Price (USD)	\$81.54	\$82.38	\$73.76	\$64.50
Yield	7.70%	7.60%	8.12%	10.32%

ECONOMIC – Non-Energy



Contract awarded for the construction of an international airport in northern Iraq

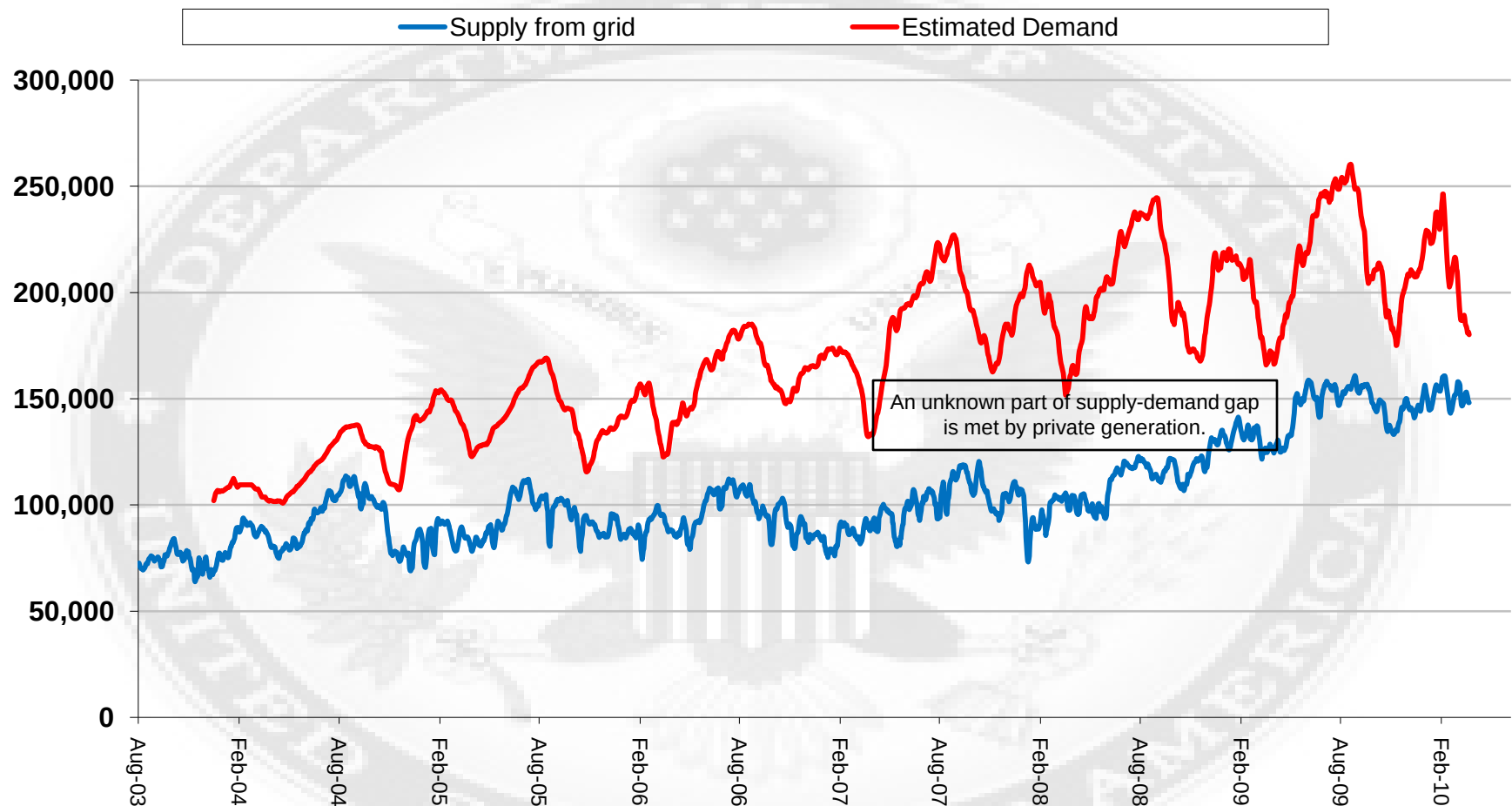
New Airport in Salah ad Din will Provide Alternative to Baghdad International:

- **Unlisted Leedco Engineers Inc. won a \$50 million contract for the construction of an international airport in the Salah ad Din Province in northern Iraq. The airport will serve as an alternative to Baghdad International Airport, Iraqi officials said. The Transportation Ministry hopes to “have the new airport operational within two years, with initial capacity of 2 million passengers a year.” The Transport Ministry plans to invite foreign companies to build an international airport in southern Iraq in April.**

Public Services – Electricity



Daily Electricity Supplied and Estimated Demand in Iraq Since January 2004



- Electricity supply from the grid March 23-29 was 17% above the same period in 2009 and met 82% of estimated demand compared with 75% for the year-earlier period.

DIPLOMATIC – Political Engagement



GOI continues to normalize relations with neighbors

Iraq Attends Arab Summit:

- **Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari led the official Iraqi delegation during the Arab Summit that was held in the Libyan city of Sirte on March 27 and 28. The summit focused on reaching a unified Arab stance on the Middle East Peace Process. According to FM Zebari, Iraq plans to host the Arab Summit in 2011.**

Beyond Baghdad



One of the selected paintings displayed at the State Department's "The Colors of Warka :Paintings by Iraqi Women of Muthanna Province"

Muthanna

"...we will help Iraq's institutions strengthen their capacity to protect the rule of law, confront corruption, and deliver basic services."

President Barack Obama

Recent Highlights

An art exhibit by Iraqi women, originally sponsored by the Muthanna PRT, has travelled all the way to Washington D.C. where it is on display at the United States Department of State. In January 2009, members of PRT Muthanna presented local women artists with the necessary supplies and guidance to put together an art exhibit named "The Colors of Warka." Their work was initially exhibited during former-U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Ryan Crocker's first visit to Muthanna province. A selection of these paintings was brought to the United States to display at the Department of State in order to honor these female artists who displayed a great deal of courage by presenting their work publicly in one of Iraq's most conservative provinces.

Kirkuk

Representatives from the Economics and Public Diplomacy section of PRT Kirkuk attended the graduation ceremony for nine local Iraqi women concluding their training at the Women's Entrepreneur Small Business Training and Development Program. The program which is sponsored by both the PRT and USAID "aims to empower women with the tools needed for small business ownership, operation, growth and sustainment." These women plan to open a variety of businesses in their community including an internet café, bridal shop, grocery store, and beauty shop. They will also be considered potential candidates for micro-grants to get their businesses started.



CONTACT INFORMATION

This brief draws from multiple sources. References are cited on the following pages.

For additional information, please see:

- Department of State, Section 2207 Report on Iraq Relief and Reconstruction
<http://2001-2009.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rpt/>
- Department of State, Section 1227 Report on Iraq
<http://2001-2009.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rpt/>
- Department of Defense, Section 9010 Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq
http://www.defenselink.mil/home/features/Iraq_Reports/index.html

Please forward all questions and/or comments to:

NEA-I-IPOG-DL@state.gov



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- VOA, March 26, <http://www1.voanews.com/english/news/Allawis-Coalition-Wins-Most-Seats-in-Iraqi-Election-89281192.html>; Washington Post, March 26, <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/03/11/world/middleeast/20100311-iraq-election.html?ref=middleeast>

Slides 5-8:

- Department of State, NEA Political Section, NEA-I-POL-DL@state.gov

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- Reuters, March 28, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE62R0AJ20100328>
- AFP, March 25, http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20100324/wl_mideast_afp/iraqunrest_20100324164156
- BBC, March 29, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8593409.stm and Reuters, March 29 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/29/AR2010032900619.html>

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- USF-I, March 26, <http://www.usf-iraq.com/news/press-releases/iraqi-security-forces-capture-suspected-abu-ghraib-aqi-leader>
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- UPI, March 29, http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2010/03/29/Demining-needed-in-Iraqoil-giants-say/UPI-11021269870270/

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- Reuters, March 29, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSKAM93255220100329?type=marketsNews>

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- Department of State, NEA/I Economics Section, NEA-I-ECON-DL@state.gov

Slide 17:

- AFP, March 25, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gLPLrn0-du1jzzu5Llch0OZzgDfA>; Al Jazeera, March 28, <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2010/03/201032813161429837.html>

Slide 18:

- Source for Stories: PRT Public Diplomacy Weekly SITREP, March 6, 2010
- US Embassy Baghdad, http://iraq.usembassy.gov/prt_muthanna031210.html
- Source for President Obama's Quote: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-of-President-Barack-Obama-Responsibly-Ending-the-War-in-Iraq/